

OUTGOING TELEGRAM

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BONN FOR AMBASSADOR, BERLIN FOR GUFLER

Bonn's 1366.

Suggest you make, in your discretion, following comments to Chancellor
US action in obtaining release crew and passengers Army helicopter forced down
East Germany:

1. Requests for return, including personal letter Gen. Hodas to Gen. Zakharov, already made in accordance procedures followed since 1945. No reply yet from Soviets.
2. We hope Soviets will arrange for return but becoming clearer and clearer Soviets and East Germans will exploit incident to force some type US-GDR communications or contacts.
3. Public opinion obliges us obtain early release and refusal deal with East Germans this connection will be seen in public eye as QUOTE standing on ceremony. UNQUOTE particularly in view precedents dealing with Chinese Communists and North Koreans for similar purpose.
4. Under these circumstances, indicating at this stage our readiness deal with

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[with East Germans to effect release appears preferable allowing matter to develop into big issue and then being forced to back down.

5. Above thinking explains statement which Secretary made to press yesterday. (Chancellor should be given verbatim text.)

6. As Secretary indicated, no question of GDR recognition involved.

7. We have not yet worked out next step to be taken if Soviet reply entirely negative. However, we are aware of problem of Communist exploitation of US-GDR contacts and will try to evolve formulas and procedures best suited to maintaining Western position and preventing exploitation adverse to our interests. Our reply might take form asking Soviets to make any necessary arrangements with East German authorities for return crew and plane and offer services personnel (probably from Potsdam Mission) if necessary to facilitate return. This reply might best be through military channels.

8. At moment we still awaiting Soviet reply to Hodes before taking further action.

You may wish inform your UK, French and, at appropriate point, your Belgian colleagues of our position. We are of course bearing in mind relationship to Belgian case.

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NIA NARA, Date 12/1/90